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2. Existing Conditions

Urban Context

The Near Southeast neighborhood is one of several waterfront communities that form the context for the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative. Occupying a key stretch of the west riverfront, the Near Southeast represents the most upriver point at which the streets and built urban fabric of the city come directly down to the riverbank. From this point, the river transitions into a more naturalized form, with parks and green areas forming a buffer to upland neighborhoods.

Due to the sharp bend in the river at this point, the Near Southeast is also surprisingly close to the US Capitol and the Capitol Hill neighborhood. Although New Jersey Avenue leads directly to the Capitol from the waterfront, the elevated Southeast Freeway and industrial landscape create formidable psychological barriers.

A separate and parallel planning initiative to transform the South Capitol Street Corridor seeks to overcome this significant barrier between the Near Southeast and Southwest neighborhoods. This area currently consists of limited-access traffic infrastructure connecting the Frederick Douglass Bridge with the freeway, creating a largely uncrossable rift in the cityscape.

The principal artery of the Near Southeast is M Street, which runs east-west and links the area to the nearby Southwest neighborhood, and to historic Anacostia via the 11th Street Bridges, forming a dramatic river-to-river connection between the Anacostia River and the Washington Channel in Southwest. Proposed gateway parks and public open spaces will celebrate the points where M Street reaches the water at either end.

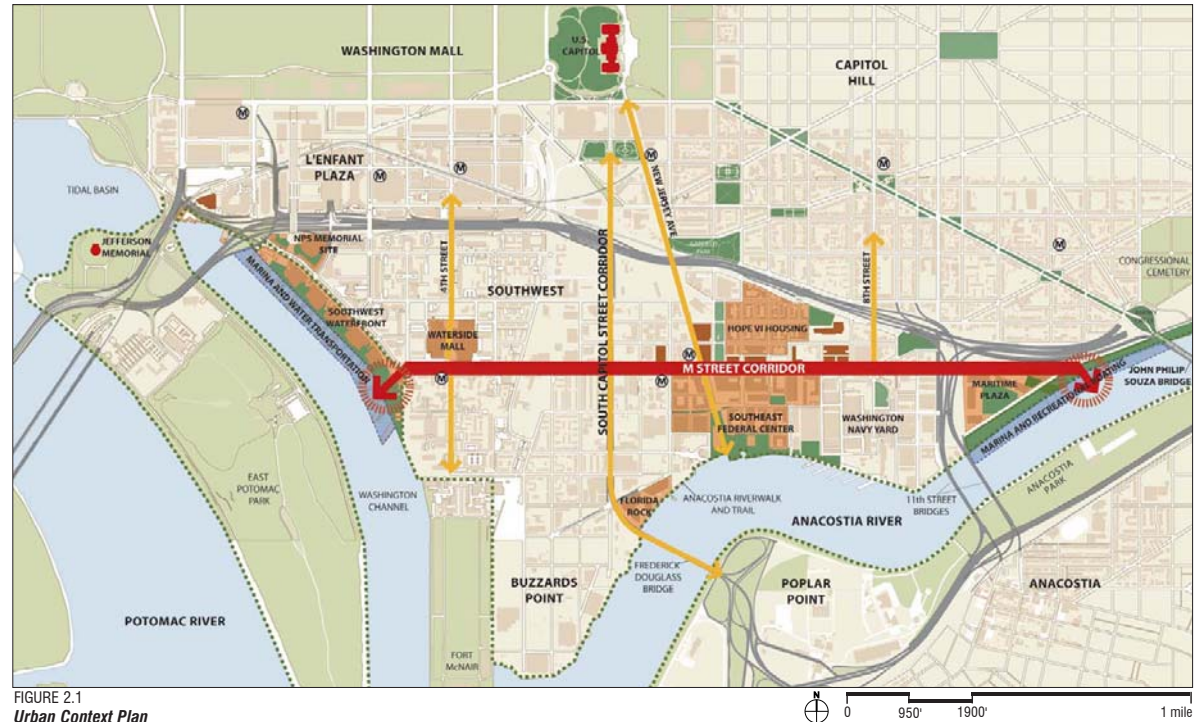


FIGURE 2.1
Urban Context Plan

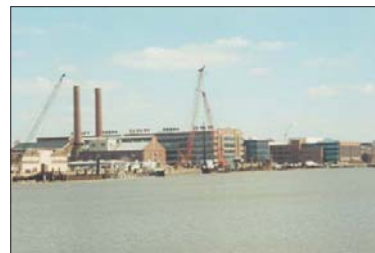


FIGURE 2.2
Waterfront View



FIGURE 2.3
View of M street



FIGURE 2.4
View of New Jersey Avenue to US Capitol

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Planning Issues

The Near Southeast Urban Design Framework includes the area bounded by the Anacostia River, South Capitol Street, and the I-395 (Southeast Freeway) corridor, extending east to Barney Circle and the 11th Street Bridge. This area comprises approximately 0.54 square miles, or 346 acres, and includes approximately 65 city blocks (or "squares" of the L'Enfant plan).

The Study Area slopes gradually from Capitol Hill to the Anacostia River. The strong presence of M Street divides the Near Southeast into north and south portions of distinctly different characters. North of M Street, a neighborhood dominated by the Arthur Capper and Carrollsburg public housing projects occupies the traditional small-scale L'Enfant street grid. South of M Street, the Washington Navy Yard and former weapons manufacturing facilities have traditionally occupied the waterfront, limiting access and use of the river as an amenity for the residential areas to the north.

The I-395 Freeway and South Capitol Street create barriers between the Near Southeast and the surrounding neighborhoods, causing a historical pattern of isolation and disinvestment in the area. There is currently very little public open space in the project area, and access to the waterfront is extremely limited.

Key Framework Issues

- Overcome barriers created by South Capitol Street, the ramps of the 11th Street Bridge, and I-395;
- Provide public waterfront access;
- Improve public spaces and street corridors to provide better connections between existing and future land uses in the Near Southeast and the waterfront;
- Eliminate or minimize real and perceived barriers created by different "precincts," such as the SEFC, public housing, Navy Yard, and industrial areas.
- Introduce stormwater best practices that will improve water quality in the Anacostia River;
- Ensure that office growth on M Street is matched with the growth of mixed-use development and public amenities.

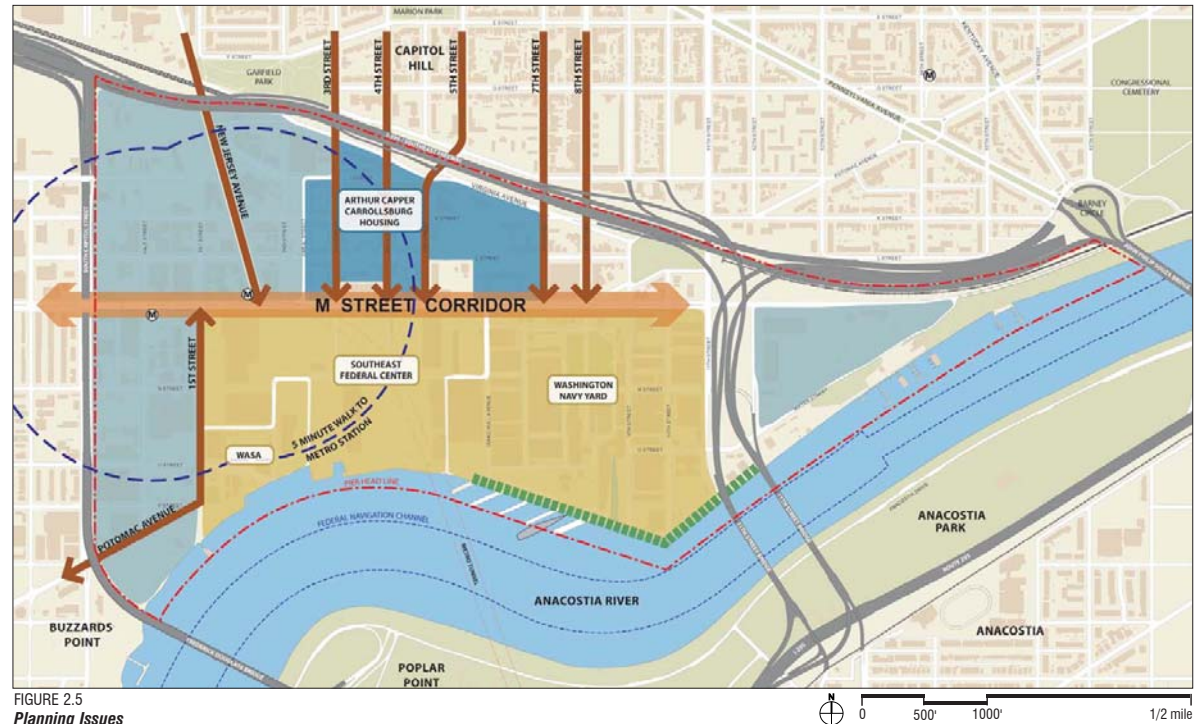


FIGURE 2.6
Carrollsburg Housing



FIGURE 2.7
View of M Street



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Existing Land Ownership

The public sector is currently the principal landowner in the Near Southeast Study Area. Federal land ownership accounts for 40% of the total acreage, while District of Columbia ownership accounts for 6%. Public streets and rights-of-way comprise an additional 32% of the total land area. Federal landowners include the U.S. Navy, the U.S. General Services Administration, the U.S. Marine Corps, the Architect of the Capitol, and the National Park Service. District of Columbia government agencies include the D.C. Housing Authority, the Washington Area Sewer Authority, D.C. Parks and Recreation, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, and D.C. Public Schools. Mixed private ownership accounts for the balance of the Study Area, representing only 18% of the total land area.

Nearly all of the 1,850 residents of the Near Southeast live in D.C. Housing Authority public housing. The only other residents are U.S. Marines that room at the Marine Barracks and U.S. Navy officers who live on the Washington Navy Yard. Individual home-owners do not account for any of the privately owned land, which is dominated by mixed industrial and commercial office developments.

Ownership and use patterns will continue to change as the General Services Administration proceeds with the disposition of the 55-acre Southeast Federal Center site for the development of a mixed-use neighborhood, and as the Capper-Carrollsbury HOPE VI mixed-income housing project is completed.

Key Framework Issues

- Break down large, contiguously owned properties into individual development parcels in scale with the traditional urban street grid;
- Establish mixed-use development throughout the project area, both north and south of M Street;
- Support the growth of a Near Southeast residential community by providing for the development and ownership of residences in the project area.

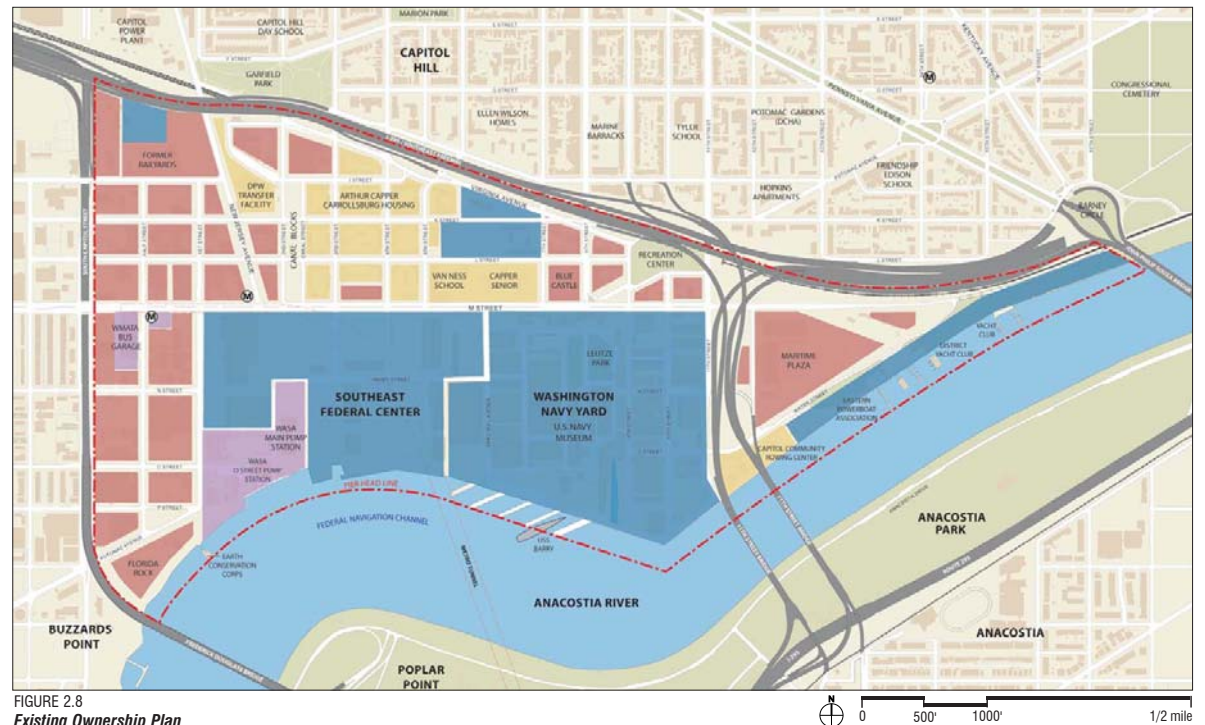
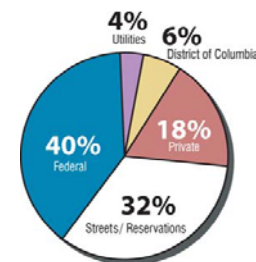


FIGURE 2.8
Existing Ownership Plan



LEGEND
Existing Ownership Plan

- Study Area Boundary
- Private Ownership
- Federal Government
- District of Columbia
- Utilities / Transportation
- Streets / Reservations

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Existing Land Use

The area south of M Street is dominated by large government properties, including the Southeast Federal Center, the Washington Navy Yard, and the Washington Area Sewer Authority. Land north of M Street is primarily occupied by public housing, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Marine Barracks.

Privately owned land in the Near Southeast has historically been underutilized, occupied by light-industrial uses and transient uses such as night clubs. More recently, commercial office development has increased with several new buildings planned or under construction. The recent relocation of 5,000 employees into the Washington Navy Yard has created a new market for commercial office space, ancillary retail, improved infrastructure and open space to serve these employees and adjacent Navy-related office uses. This has spurred the private development of new office buildings at 300 M Street, 80 M Street, and Maritime Plaza east of the 11th Street Bridge, adding some 800,000 square feet. The impending relocation of the U.S. Department of Transportation to the Near Southeast will add about 1.7 million additional square feet of office space.

The rapidly-developing office corridor along M Street is abutted by a residential area to the north. During the past 50 years, residential use in the Near Southeast has been confined to a small area north of M Street and east of the Canal Block reservations. The planned Capper-Carrollsborg HOPE VI development will add over 700 mixed-income residential units to the area.

Key Framework Issues

- Significantly increase residential use in the Near Southeast, particularly in the SEFC, South Capitol Gateway, Canal Blocks, and Capper/Carrollsborg areas;
- Encourage office development on South Capitol Street and support a mix of office, retail, and residential uses along the M Street Corridor and in the Canal Blocks area;
- Increase retail space along M Street and at the waterfront;
- Reduce the amount of underutilized land occupied by surface parking and industrial uses;
- Increase land dedicated to public open space.

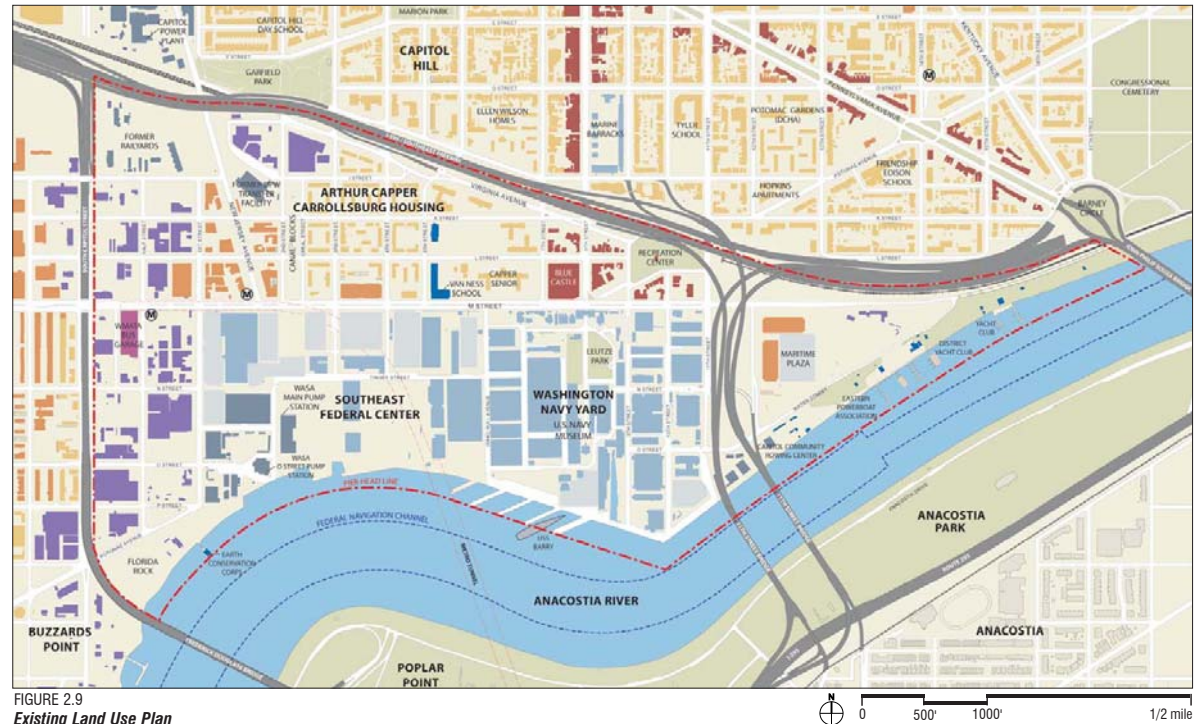
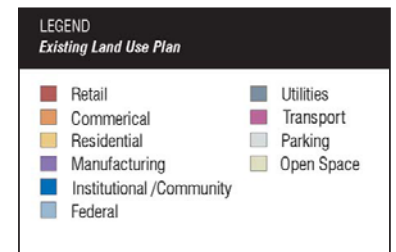


FIGURE 2.10
Washington Navy Yard



FIGURE 2.11
New Office Development on M Street



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Existing Zoning

A large portion of the Near Southeast Study Area is controlled by the Federal Government and therefore not subject to District of Columbia zoning categories and restrictions. As a result of the Southeast Federal Center Public-Private Redevelopment Act, the 55-acre SEFC site will revert to private land ownership and will thus be subject to zoning following the transfer of the land from federal ownership. The remaining areas of the Near Southeast include a variety of zoning categories including Residential, Commercial and Manufacturing.

The Capitol Gateway Overlay District adopted in 2002 establishes mixed-use development on the Near Southeast waterfront, with specific FAR incentives for the inclusion of residential uses in this area. The Overlay District defines areas of increasing allowable height and density moving north from the river to M Street.

The Capitol South TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) Receiving Zone permits the transfer of floor area to the designated zone from the Downtown Design District. The permitted increases raise the allowable Floor Area Ratio (FAR) from 6.5 to a maximum of 10. Height increases are also permitted to accommodate the potential added floor area. This zoning change greatly increases the potential capacity of the area for new construction.

Key Framework Issues

- Fully adopt the Capitol Gateway overlay zone in order to allow residential development as well as achieve waterfront setbacks and active ground floor uses on M Street;
- Coordinate the significant Planned Urban Development cases in the neighborhood, including the Capper-Carrollsbury HOPE VI and the US Department of Transportation headquarters;
- Coordinate a new overlay zone for the balance of the Southeast Federal Center in order to achieve the objectives of the Southeast Federal Center Public-Private Redevelopment Act in accordance with neighborhood planning objectives;
- Review all remaining zoning with regard to land use, density and design controls as they pertain to the overall neighborhood development objectives for the Near Southeast.

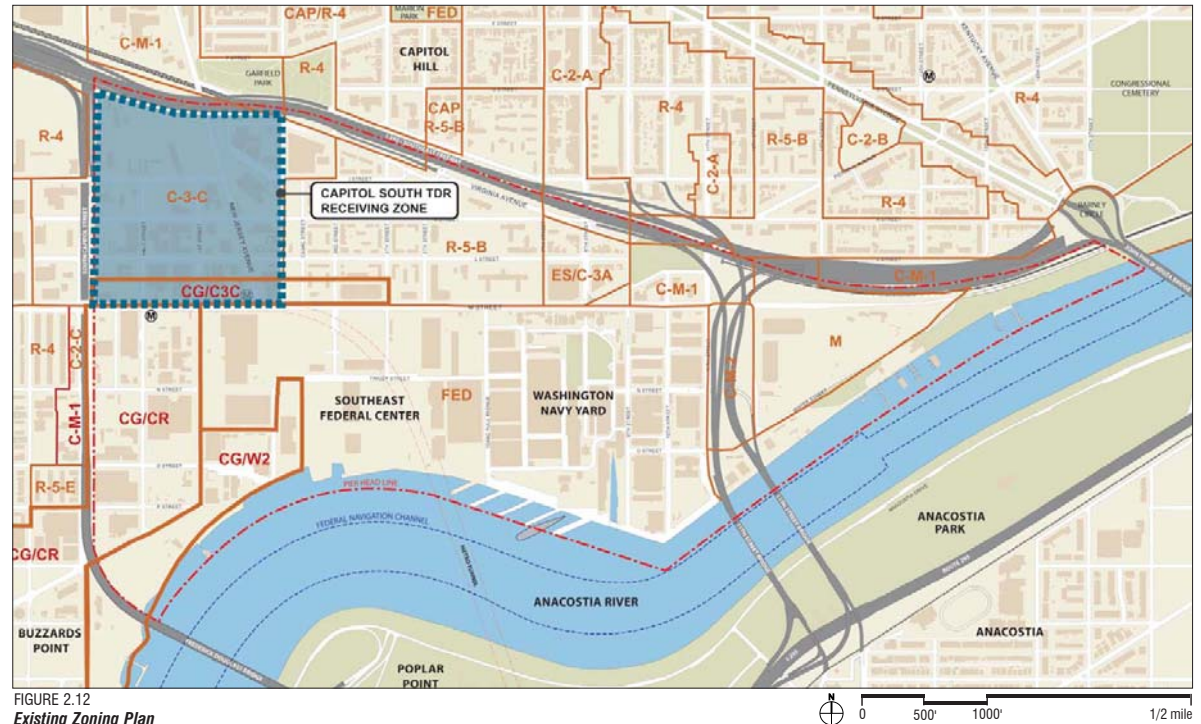


FIGURE 2.12
Existing Zoning Plan

LEGEND Key To Zoning Districts				
R-4 Use: single-family residential, churches, public schools Max. Lot Occupancy: 60% Min. Lot Area: 1,500 sf Max. Ht: 3 stories, 40'-0"	W-2 Use: residential, commercial, light industrial Max. Lot Occupancy: 75% (residential) FAR: 4.0 Max. Ht: 60'-0"	C-M-1 Use: low bulk commercial, light manufacturing Max. Lot Occupancy: 60% (residential) FAR: 3.0 Max. Ht: 3 stories, 40'-0"	M Use: general industrial FAR: 0.0 Max. Ht: 90'-0"	C-2-B Use: office, retail, housing, mixed-use Max. Lot Occupancy: 80% (residential) FAR: 3.5 (residential) 1.5 (other uses) Max. Ht: 65'-0"
R-5-B Use: single-family dwellings, flats, apartment buildings Max. Lot Occupancy: 60% FAR: 1.5 Max. Ht: 50'-0"	CR Use: residential, commercial, light industrial Max. Lot Occupancy: 75% (residential) FAR: 6.0 (residential) 3.0 (other uses) Max. Ht: 90'-0"	C-M-2 Use: medium bulk, light commercial Max. Lot Occupancy: 4 Max. Ht: 50'-0"	C-2-A Use: office, retail, residential Max. Lot Occupancy: 80% (residential) FAR: 2.5 (residential) 1.5 (other uses) Max. Ht: 50'-0"	C-3-C Use: office, retail, housing, mixed-use Max. Lot Occupancy: 100% FAR: 6.5 Max. Ht: 90'-0"

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Social and Market Character

Existing Social Character

According to the 2000 Census, 1,853 people currently live in the Near Southeast, in a total of 859 households. The existing residential population is 97% African-American with a median family income of \$8,089, and is concentrated in an area of public housing just north of M Street. 60% of the families living in the Near Southeast have lived in the same home for at least five years, a larger proportion than in most urban areas. The nearby Capitol Hill townhomes that replaced the abandoned Ellen Wilson public housing project were financed by a HOPE VI grant, and have successfully integrated into the Capitol Hill neighborhood without requiring ongoing subsidy from the government. The Near Southeast has been without a diverse, mixed-income residential community for decades. As a result, community involvement in current and future planning processes in the Near Southeast must develop as the residential community expands.

Currently, approximately 16,500 people are employed in the Near Southeast—most of whom work at the Navy Yard. There are few retail opportunities for office workers or residents, and no cultural or entertainment centers to keep office workers in the neighborhood in the evening or enrich the residential neighborhoods.

■ White
■ African American
■ American Indian
■ Asian
■ Native Hawaiian/P.I.
■ Other
■ Two or more races

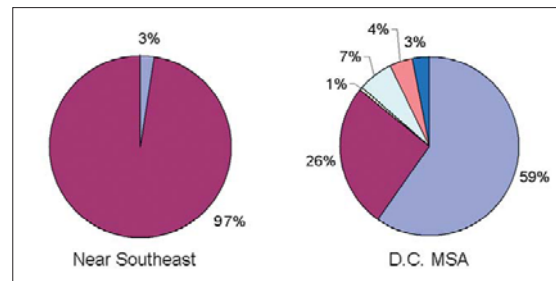


FIGURE 2.15
Population Race: Near Southeast compared to District of Columbia

Existing Market

Numerous large developments and public projects are underway along M Street, including the redevelopment of the Southeast Federal Center, Waterside Mall, and the Southwest Waterfront. The market for commercial office space in the Near Southeast is strong, and developers have responded with investments in over 10 million square feet of new and planned commercial space.

The District is experiencing a high demand for housing that continues to outstrip supply. The diverse residential market, which includes young professionals and government workers as well as empty nesters and retirees, is particularly attracted to waterfront and downtown locations. There is a great opportunity to combine the rapid commercial development in the Southeast with mixed-use residential development.

Key Framework Issues

- Increase residential density and expand residential neighborhoods;
- Diversify residential income mix and diversity of housing types without displacing any existing residents;
- Support development of amenities that will help to create a series of integrated neighborhoods for people who work and live in the Near Southeast. Such amenities might include parks, retail opportunities, food services, and cultural or entertainment facilities;
- Support the growth of community and local development corporations that can guide the rapid changes occurring in the Near Southeast.



FIGURE 2.13
Community meeting in 2001

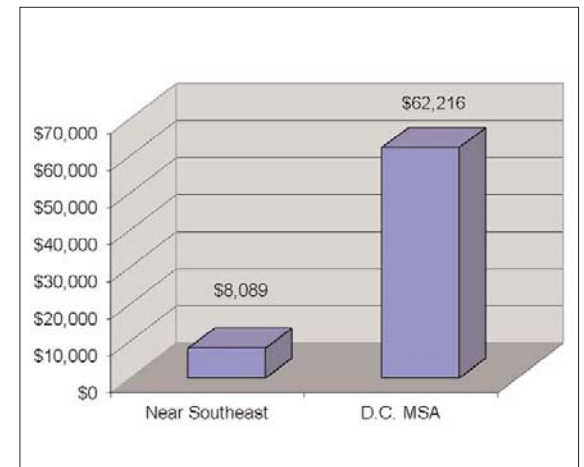


FIGURE 2.14
Median Household Income: Near Southeast compared to District of Columbia

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Historic L'Enfant Street and Reservation Plan

The famous L'Enfant plan for Washington, combining a standardized grid pattern with diagonal avenues leading to public buildings, continues to define development patterns today. The L'Enfant plan is itself a designated historic landmark, protected by a special review process for alterations. The strength of the original design, along with continued enforcement of its prescriptions, is responsible for the powerful and unified urban design still found throughout the city.

In the Near Southeast, many elements of the L'Enfant plan still exist, despite having suffered great damage by the construction of the Southeast Freeway in the 1960's in the alignment of Virginia Avenue. The freeway effectively cut off a large area of the grid from the adjacent area of Capitol Hill. A tiny segment of Virginia Avenue, intended as a grand boulevard to the river, continues to exist as an unbuilt right-of-way just east of the 11th Street bridge ramps. To the west, New Jersey Avenue provides the strongest remaining connection from the Near Southeast to the US Capitol.

L'Enfant's original grid allowed space for the Washington Navy Yard and an adjoining inlet of the Anacostia River which has since been filled; these areas account for the lack of street connections from M Street to the waterfront today. The partial route of a historic canal, no longer extant, is reflected in a series of reservations running north-south and known today as the "Canal Blocks". An additional reservation was provided as the site for the original Eastern Market. This space has now been slightly reconfigured, and will be occupied by publically accessible playing fields associated with the proposed US Marine Barracks development.

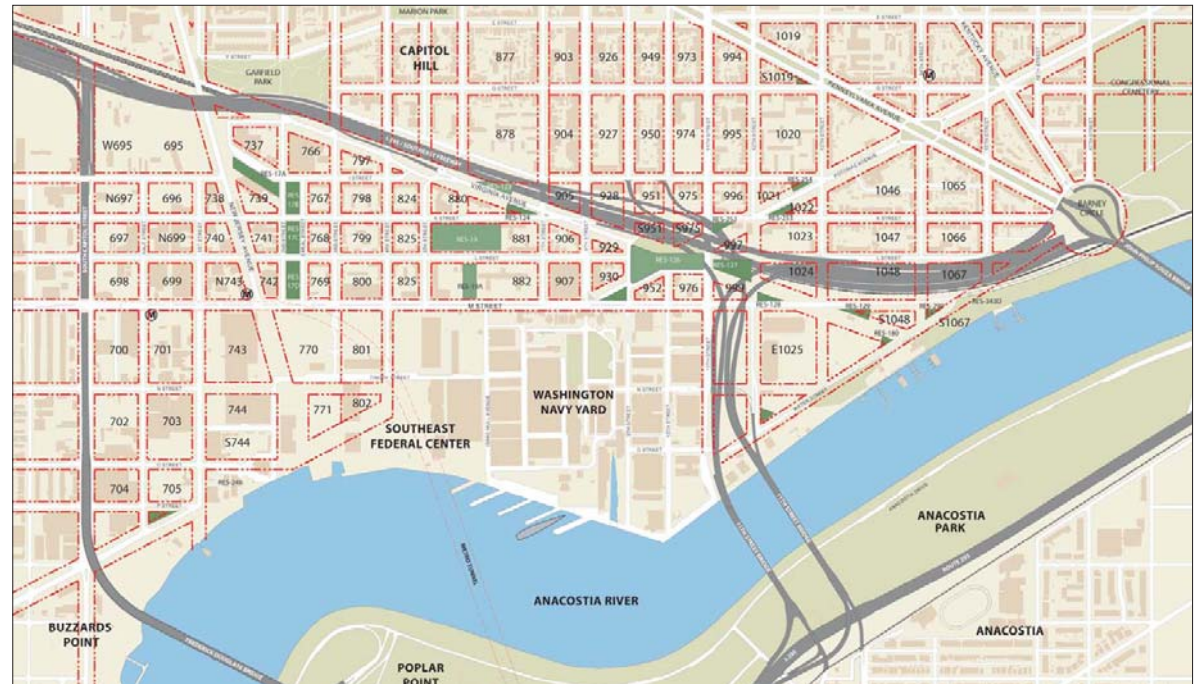


FIGURE 2.16
Historic L'Enfant Street and Reservation Plan

0 500' 1000' 1/2 mile



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Historic Resources

There are a number of notable structures and properties in the Near Southeast that once typified the entire area. While not all of these properties are currently designated as historic landmarks, all are important elements of the social and structural history of the area.

National Register Historic Districts/Landmarks :

- L'Enfant Plan (streets and reservations)
- A** Capitol Hill Historic District
- B** Washington Navy Yard Historic District

Districts Eligible for National Register listing:

- C** Washington Navy Yard Annex (Southeast Federal Center)
- D** Washington Navy Yard Historic District extension

Properties Eligible for National Register or DC listing:

- 1** D.C. Pumping Station - 3rd & N Streets, SE
- 2** St. Vincent de Paul Church - Unit block of M Street, SE
- 3** St. Vincent de Paul Church Rectory - 14 M Street, SE
- 4** Metrobus Garage - 23-33 M Street, SE
- 5** DC Garage - 100 O Street, SE

Properties Meriting Consideration for Rehabilitation:

- 6** St. Paul African Union Church (1924) - 900 4th Street, SE
- 7** Row Houses, 1000 block of 3rd Street, SE, east side
- 8** Row Houses, 900 block of 5th Street, SE, west side
- 9** Row Houses (1885), 1020, 1022 & 1024 1st Street
- 10** W.A. Richards House, 21 N Street SE, (1878) and other rowhouses (1870s-1880s), 13-19 and 36-38 N Street
- 11** Lank Woodworking Company (1895-1928), 10011013 1st Street, SE and 59 K Street, SE
- 12** J.E. Hurley Machine & Boiler Works, 1001-1019 Half Street, SE

Archaeological Resources (Determined Eligible or Potential):

- Southeast Federal Center (extensive archaeological sites);
- Anacostia shoreline sites;
- Foundations/Structural remnants: N and Half Streets, SE;
- Raised Areas - 1st and I Sts, SE (sw corner), and K and Half Sts, SE (se corner).

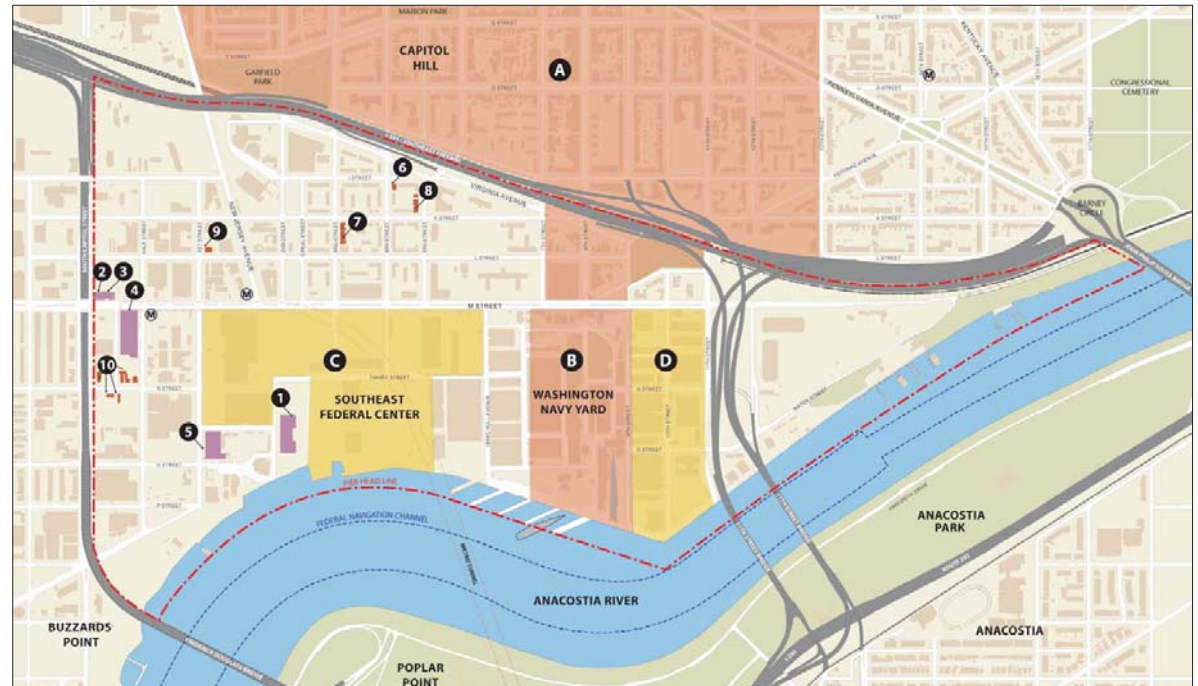


FIGURE 2.17
Historic Resources Plan



FIGURE 2.18
"Blue Castle" is an historic trolley barn



FIGURE 2.19
Latrobe Gate at Navy Yard is of national significance

